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worklife

ALTERNATIVES

Almost every day the news media carry stories on strikes, lockouts and other forms of confrontation in labour-management relations. Despite the underlying reasons — or perhaps, because of them — an increasing number of Canadians are convinced there has to be a better way to approach our industrial relations.

My Department's new 14-point program does attempt to set the framework for a better way. It's designed to broaden the scope for solutions to our industrial relations problems by improving the work environment, improving the collective bargaining process, and improving the structure and operation of the labour relations system. The new approach is based on better communication, co-operation and participation.

WORKLIFE, and its French-language equivalent, "**VIE AU TRAVAIL**", will be looking for all kinds of alternatives to the adversarial aspects of the present system.

WORKLIFE will be published bi-monthly and highlight news in individual workplaces. If there is something worthy of reporting occurring where you work, please share your experiences by writing to the Editor, **WORKLIFE**, Labour Canada, Ottawa, K1A 0J2.

This first issue contains articles about a number of items currently being debated in various parts of the



The Honourable John C. Munro
Minister of Labour

country, including the new British Columbia and Quebec labour legislation, and Occupational Safety and Health. On these and other items of labour news, we shall be keeping you up-to-date.

Again, your input will be welcomed, and will help **WORKLIFE** to become a forum for an objective discussion of practical solutions and better ways.

WORKLIFE replaces the former "Teamwork in Industry". It complements the Department's official journals, the monthly **LABOUR GAZETTE/LA GAZETTE DU TRAVAIL**, which provides in-depth analyses of contemporary labour affairs issues.

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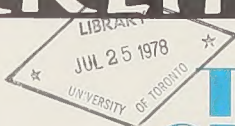
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Contributors to this issue:

Barb Leimsner Jacob Finkelman
Ed Finn Michel Gauvin
George Dobie John Robbie
Mike Lascelles

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THE GREAT DEBATE

Almost two years ago the Canadian Labour Congress approved a policy of three-way economic planning between government, business and labour. It was an attempt to introduce a better way for the three groups to deal with issues that affect them, and an attempt to work within a new relationship.

The policy was supported by some business, government, and labour leaders, and rejected by others. The most recent criticism has come from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, at its convention in Vancouver last October.

A policy approved by the 231,000-member CUPE read:

"If the CLC enters a form of tripartism from its present position of weakness, it would be co-opted into serving the interests of corporations because the government has not shown itself to be a neutral third party standing between business and labour."

"It is still a two-to-one situation," she told convention delegates.

Despite the CUPE stand, CLC president Joe Morris reaffirmed his commitment to working with business and government on economic planning in the post-control period.

While more doubts are being cast upon the willingness of some labour leaders to participate in any consultative forums, recent lay-offs in the nickel industry have prompted others to take a second look at the benefits of more involvement with business and government in decision-making.

Gerard Docquier, national director of the 190,000-member United Steelworkers of America said in a recent speech, made shortly after the announcement of proposed lay-offs that Steelworkers want a regular role in company decision-making through collective bargaining and other means.

CUPE president Grace Hartman: "It's still a two-to-one situation."



CUPE president Grace Hartman said the labour movement is not yet strong enough to participate with government and business on an equal footing.

Mr. Docquier's proposal was in part related to tripartism, but it was also a call for more power for the individual workers.

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"The lack of labour input in the decision-making process that directly affects our lives must come to an end. We must involve labour in all that concerns the lives of working people, both in and outside the workplace."

Such involvement can take place through worker-management committees, or workers on boards of directors, both of which are versions of industrial democracy.

Federal labour minister John Munro said in a recent speech in November that participation by workers on boards of directors "might well have given the miners in Sudbury and Thompson a better handle on job security than they have achieved at the bargaining table."

Yet, this form of participation has been opposed recently by other labour leaders. Cliff Pilkey, president of the Ontario Federation of Labour said he believes that the free collective bargaining system is better than industrial democracy schemes, and that the adversarial system of confrontation is better for Canadians.

At this time, it is hard to say what stand the CLC will take in the future on the issue of tripartism. Dennis McDermott, likely to be the new CLC president, has in the past been opposed to a policy of tripartism. He indicated recently that the whole issue would have to be reviewed before the CLC's convention in April.

FINLAND ESTABLISHES PROGRAM

Early this year, most Finnish government departments will have introduced a form of workers participation devised to suit their own circumstances. The monthly publication Industrial Relations — Europe, published in Brussels, reports the recent establishment of the first such program in the ministry of finance. Staff councils have been set up and staff representatives attend meetings of department heads.

by Ed Finn

WORKLIFE could not have been born at a more opportune time. Canada is at the crossroads in the evolution of its labour relations system, its work methods, its whole approach to the economic interplay between business, labour and government.

The old ways have served us well for more than half a century. But in an age of growing complexity, interdependence, chronic unemployment, dwindling fuel resources, and so many other "future shocks," the old ways have become outmoded.

Can we really afford the disruptive and divisive adversary system much longer? Will our young workers continue to tolerate managerial authoritarianism and the tedious grind of factory and office? Will we ever see a resumption of "free collective bargaining" as we knew it before October, 1975?

Simply to pose these questions (and many similar ones could be put) is to sketch the dimensions of an enormous challenge now faced by the leaders of our unions, our companies, and our governments. They have to devise new and more flexible policies. They have to replace conflict with co-operation. They have to learn how to humanize work, how to bring democracy to the workplace, how to divide the national income more rationally and equitably.

These tasks are formidable, but not insuperable. Indeed, they will have to be accomplished if we are to revitalize our economy and revive a national sense of purpose.

The obstacles confronting us are rooted more in our attitudes and beliefs than in reality — in our reliance on tradition, in our fear of change, in the vested interests we have acquired in keeping things as they are.

WORKLIFE, I hope, will help to jar us out of our comfortable easy-chairs, out of the inertia that any long-established

system accumulates. By showing us alternatives and options, by focusing on those as-yet-all-too-few innovative developments in industrial relations, by providing a forum for fresh ideas, this publication can both instruct and inspire. It can help ease our painful adjustment to the changes that will inevitably come.

Our choices have really been narrowed down to two. Either we become part of the solution, helping to shape these changes, or we become part of the problem, fighting a hopeless delaying action that will isolate us from the decision-making process.

The apparent collapse of the tripartite initiative launched almost two years ago by the Canadian Labour Congress is more tragic than we perhaps yet realize. This was a valiant effort by the CLC — or at least by some of its officers — to find a way out of the blind alley into which the adversary system has led us. The manifesto on tripartism adopted by the Congress at its 1976 convention had the potential to bring about the more fair and reasonable economic system that we need in the last quarter of the 20th century.

It was blocked by the conservatives — by the conservatives in business, in government, in the labour movement, and in the media. Too radical, they said. Undemocratic, elitist, impractical, they said.

Most of the non-union critics of the CLC's tripartite concept are the same ones who regularly complain about "union greed" about "excessive wage gains" and about strikes. Yet, when the CLC proposes a co-operative approach, they shoot it down.

The internal labour opponents of tripartism simply can't let go of their dogmatic adherence to the adversary system. They haven't been able to bargain freely for two-and-a-half years, and will find that the "freedom" that follows the lifting of controls on April 14 will be illusory, too. But they'd rather stick with a dying system than

know than venture into a new one they don't know — and which they do not feel equipped to handle.

The business community, too, is full of stand-patters, "free enterprise" lovers, and lin-pot autocrats who judge any new idea strictly on whether or not it will help them make more money.

And the politicians are no less set in their ways. For all their high-flown rhetoric about "participatory democracy" and "majority rule," most of them really don't want labour and management to have a say in policy and decision-making. They'd rather let things deteriorate so they can impose "solutions" — in the public interest, of course.

The alternative to a co-operative mechanism, in which business, labour and government jointly work out a better way to run the economy, is not a continuation of the adversary system. It is not a reflowering of private enterprise. It is statism — a highly centralized government control of the economy. Wage and price controls are only one example of statism.

Some Canadians seem to be ready to let government run everything. But most of us, I hope, would rather have the interests of working people and of corporations articulated by their own representatives.

That is becoming increasingly more difficult — and may become impossible if the economic conservatives who now direct our major institutions keep resisting the structural and attitudinal reforms so urgently needed.

WORKLIFE, by showing what can be done (and what, on a small scale, has been done) to invigorate, democratize, and reform our ways of working, producing, and sharing, will help sow the seeds from which such changes may grow.

A small contribution in itself, perhaps, but one that may in the end prove invaluable.

QUEBEC'S ANTI-SCAB LEGISLATION

What has been described by Premier René Lévesque as the most progressive labour law in the western world has been approved by the Quebec national assembly.

Bill 45, overhauling the Quebec labour code, is known as the "anti-scab law" because of its provisions preventing the use of strike-breakers, but the new law also contains sections dealing with the compulsory deduction of union dues, and others related to certification, collective agreements, and the use of secret ballots.

But it was the anti-scab provisions of the Bill which caused the most controversy among employer and labour groups, and which were modified by labour minister Pierre-Marc Johnson a month before the bill was made law.

NO HIRED REPLACEMENTS DURING LEGAL STRIKES

The "anti-scab bill" makes it illegal for employers to replace workers on a legal strike (or locked out) or to use members of a striking bargaining unit to maintain production, except in certain cases specified in the Bill. It

also makes it mandatory for employers to rehire workers who want to reclaim their jobs at the end of a strike or lockout.

AMENDMENTS INTRODUCED

Last November, following strong criticism from employer groups that the Bill was biased towards unions, Mr. Johnson tabled about 70 amendments to the Bill, several of which modified the anti-scab provisions.

As changed, the Bill allows the hiring of new employees to maintain essential services during strikes, in cases where the union or the employees fail

to comply with a legal agreement or decision to maintain those services. Another proposed modification of the Bill allows an employer involved in a labour dispute to take measures to protect his property from irreparable damage.

Further amendments prevent an employer from resuming production in mid-strike by taking advantage of the clause in the proposed Bill that permits him to hire workers to protect perishable goods or equipment. They also allow the government to send in an investigator to ensure that the employer abides by the legislation.

WORKERS keep on trucking

Five years ago, employees at Byer's Transport were far from satisfied with both their jobs and the company.

"Morale was sickening," says Leo Weslosky, a foreman with the Edmonton-based company for almost 18 years.

"People who had been here for 25 years were quitting."

Things got so bad at Byer's, which came under ownership of Pacific Western Airlines in 1969, that there was a two-day wildcat strike in 1973. A provincial conciliator ruled it was useless to intervene because of the "atmosphere of hostility".

But, the mood at Byer's had changed — for the better. Turnover is down, productivity is up and the employee-employer relationship has improved.

"It's like day and night," says Weslosky of the change visible today.

The reason? Workers at Byer's have more control over the company and how it runs its affairs. They are its shareholders, and they're seeing a profitable company growing under their care.

The transition began in 1975 after the Alberta government — which had bought the money-losing company from PWA — expressed an interest in selling.

About 120 employees of the company, led by senior executive Sandy Slator, raised \$100,000 in equity capital, with investments varying from \$500 to \$5,000.

The employees, assisted by the Alberta Opportunity Corporation (a provincial agency which supports new ventures) bought the company from the government for \$1.3 million.

THE LOGICAL THING TO DO

"Really, I figured that we could provide an alternative to PWA and that an employee ownership scheme could work," says the 33-year-old Slator, now the company's president and general manager.

Slator was encouraged to try the employee-ownership option by Rhys Eytton, then a PWA vice-president, and also by reports of successful experiments in profit-sharing, such as the one at Supreme Aluminum Industries, in Toronto.

"It just seemed the logical thing to do," explains Slator.

The ownership structure, which was worked out by Slator, gives senior management 30 per cent of the equity

capital, middle management 15 per cent, junior management (including foremen) 10 per cent and rank and file workers about 45 per cent. (This last figure has dropped slightly since 1975, because of promotions.) As well, no individual may hold more than 15 per cent of the shares.

IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

The change to employee ownership put two rank and file employees on the 10-man board of directors. One of them, Harvey Norstrom, a 37-year-old driver, has become a busy director, full of ideas for improving the company's performance.

His suggestion that management lighten its belt and keep employees informed of the reasons for all budget changes, was one way of improving the productivity of company

structure at Byer's. Cash dividends on shares which are paid three times a year, have doubled.

"Everybody has an increased interest in making this company successful," says Floyd Shannon, the 48-year-old purchasing agent for Byer's. Shannon says he often works 18 hours a day, simply because he believes in what he is doing.

"It's sort of like being in business for yourself. You can have some affect on how well the company does, and see the profits of your efforts."

WORKERS ARE HAPPIER

Les Weslosky supports the new attitude of the employees at Byer's. "If you're working for an ordinary company you just do...here, you've got room to improve every month."

worker councils or committees there are no such structures at Byer's, although Slator thinks these might be adopted in the future.

Byer's style of democracy is based on an open-door policy that is practised and praised by both management and employees. "Hell, I don't believe that I have all the answers," explains Slator.

Perhaps one of the most heartening improvements, however, is the relationship between the union and management.

"There is still good tough bargaining every year — they still want their share of the pie," reports Will Permann, 45, the agent for Local 362 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. But, he notes, "the change is that the company has better relations with the union."



employees. A suggestion by foreman Weslosky has saved the company \$3,000 a year in gas bills.

It follows naturally that with improved performance would come improved profits.

In the first year of the takeover profits were \$250,000 — a tremendous jump over the loss of \$480,000 in 1973. Profits for 1977 will reach almost half a million, reports Slator.

These profits are shared by the employees, under the ownership

Production since the takeover has increased by 50 per cent, dock workers load 2,000 pounds of freight compared with about 1,200 before the days of employee ownership. Claims for damages have dropped 60 per cent. Turnover among dock workers is about 10 per cent — compared to 40 per cent three years ago.

Says Slator, "Workers are happier being associated with a winner."

Though most experiments with so-called "industrial democracy" call for input on company decisions from

After two years of employee ownership, Byer's is living testimony to the belief that workers can successfully participate through ownership or decision-making at the workplace, and enjoy their work more because of it.

Concludes Shannon, "I feel good about it myself. We get a lot of satisfaction from working for ourselves. I look forward to going to work now."

This article is based on a story written by John Dolg, and is used here with the author's permission.

PERSPECTIVES

STRIKES AND ESSENTIAL INDUSTRIES

by Jacob Finkelman

The Canadian public is becoming increasingly angry about strikes, lawful or otherwise. Although the public interest is generally well served by collective bargaining, employers and trade unions have not convinced the public of this. Indeed, unless both groups discipline themselves and display a greater sense of social responsibility, the public will demand that discipline and responsibility be imposed upon them by government. In short, the choice that lies before employers and trade unions today is self-regulation or government regulation.

One area where there is the likelihood that the government will play an increasingly active role is known as essential industries. These include occupations or operations which provide essential public services (such as health services, transportation and communications) which cannot be disrupted.

Essential services fall into two classes: 1) those which affect public safety and security and cannot be disrupted, even for a short period of time, and 2) those which may be disrupted for a short period before the public welfare is adversely affected.

A different approach ought to be taken in dealing with either group. The most essential services (operations or occupations) should be identified — perhaps by some permanent machinery set up to identify them — before a dispute arises. Any action that would disrupt these services, affecting public safety or security, should be prohibited in both public and private sectors.

On the other hand, where safety or security would not be affected by a disruption of services, letting a strike or lockout take place before any

intervention may be an effective outlet for employees who feel they must bring their grievances to the public's attention in a dramatic way. Such actions can also bring to light the realities of the dispute.

BACK-TO-WORK LEGISLATION

The problem with government intervention is there is no generally accepted method of determining the "breaking point" of a strike or lockout. The course usually followed, with a few notable exceptions, is for the government to legislate the employees back to work, with the announcement that "the dispute has gone on long enough".

In most cases, the government is hesitant to introduce "back to work" legislation until it has been shown that the public welfare is seriously (or even disastrously) affected by the dispute. Political debates on the introduction of

such legislation is often bitter, with charges made (usually without much supporting evidence) that the legislation is either premature or too late.

Furthermore, in a dispute between the government and a public service union, the government may be reluctant to introduce legislation because it can be charged with playing the heavy-handed employer role, rather than protecting the public interest.

The government could avoid this dilemma by giving the labour relations board the responsibility of assessing a claim that the public welfare is seriously jeopardized.

Members of labour relations boards have expertise in dealing with employers and trade unions and would be more sensitive to the needs of the situation than would any tribunal whose members serve only on a part-time basis.

The board should not be empowered to issue a cease and desist order. Rather it should only be authorized to make a finding as to whether the public welfare is seriously jeopardized. Such a finding would then pave the way for the government to introduce appropriate legislation, without being charged that it is acting hastily or arbitrarily.

The board should be directed to deal with such an application on a top priority basis, perhaps after consultation with the parties involved rather than through a formal hearing. It might also be provided with a monitoring facility.

At the same time, however, I do not propose limiting the government's authority to introduce legislation on its own initiative at any time it feels that the public demands it.

Also, while I feel that a labour relations board may be given the responsibility to decide whether or not employees on a **illegal** strike should be ordered back to work I don't believe that any administrative body, such as a labour relations board, should order employees on a **lawful** strike to return to work. Any directive to employees on a lawful strike to return to work would deprive them of their entitlement to continue such a strike.

Any change in this area must come from a democratically elected body, not through an administrative body such as a labour relations board.

While there may become difficulty in the phrasing of terms setting out the circumstances in which such action prescribed here could be invoked, and by whom, I am convinced that human ingenuity can devise an appropriate solution for this.

Although little of what I have said here is new, I believe it is an idea whose time has come.

JACOB FINKELMAN is former chairman of the Public Service Staff Relations Board.



THE B.C. LABOUR SCENE...A REVIEW

by George Dobie

British Columbia was breezing along last year with the best labour disputes record in more than a decade when suddenly something went wrong.

It happened just after Labour Day celebrations.

Residents of this volatile, union-intensive province had been greeted through a long and pleasant summer with unusual headlines about how the number of strikes, lockouts and walkouts of all kinds was down dramatically.

Man-days lost due to labour disputes were only 100,000 for the year rather than the usual 10 to 15 times that figure.

Mind you, a division of opinion existed over the reasons for this industrial tranquility.

The pragmatists said it all stemmed from the discipline forced on the trade unions by the federal anti-inflation controls.



B.C. Labour Minister Allan Williams

THE LABOUR BOARD

But the visionaries of industrial relations felt an era of industrial peace could be developing due to a new labour code and the way it was being administered by a tripartite provincial board set up especially for the role.

This group sensed that the people on the labour relations board had brought labour and management adversaries together in a way that was breaking down traditional areas of suspicion and hate.

The neutral chairman was Paul Weiler from the Osgoode law school in Toronto (who will leave for Harvard this summer), flanked by Jack Moore from the International Woodworkers of America and Ed Peck from the B.C. towboat industry's bargaining agency, as vice-chairmen.

The board, which also was made up of part-time appointees from labour and management organizations, not only did a good job conducting panel hearings of disputed cases on a

tripartite basis, but also maintained the effectiveness of mediation in labour relations.

In scores of cases, the board successfully mediated disputes and avoided the necessity of holding formal hearings. This re-assured unionists that the board was a labour body in practice as well as in name, and was not restricted to legalistic approaches.

Except for some isolated incidents, the year went smoothly. Some uneasiness developed early in the year when it was discovered that the Employers' Council of B.C. and some other management groups had made secret representations with a view to obtaining major amendments to the labour code.

In fact, considerable tension existed behind the scenes over *Socred* intentions regarding the code. Finally, the government introduced amendments September 6 making it tougher for unions to organize the unorganized, increasing to 55 per cent the majority needed for a union to win certification either automatically or by a representation vote, up from the clear majority of 50 per cent.

AMENDMENTS INTRODUCED

However, it was later explained that an error had occurred at the departmental level and it was never intended to require 55 per cent in representation on votes. So the amendment was amended to return to a straight majority.

The amendments also boosted to 45 from 35 per cent the number of signed-up workers needed for a union to make an initial application for certification; removed the right of unions to secure from employers the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of workers; allowed employers to make a greater effort to counteract a union organizing drive without risk of facing unfair practice charges, including a direct statement of fact of opinion about why their workers should not join a union; widened the exclusions of middle-management employees from the definition of employees so that superintendents cannot be organized; and legislated the Rand dues-paying formula as a minimum feature of a first collective agreement, which was the only provision benefiting unions.

Len Guy, secretary-treasurer of the B.C. Federation of Labour, questioned why the government was rocking the boat during a period of industrial harmony. Former labour minister King, sitting on the opposition side of the legislature, called the amendments autocratic and divisive; but *Socred* labour minister Williams claimed the thrust was to eliminate marginal certification cases and ensure employee wishes were clearly expressed.

labour scene

FERRY WORKERS STRIKE

The most serious dispute, however, involved a sudden strike on the eve of the Thanksgiving Day weekend by the B.C. Ferry and Marine Workers Union. The workers defied a 90-day cooling off period and a labour board order to return to work. The dispute had been triggered by a long impasse in bargaining over hours of work and overtime pay.

The workers returned to their jobs a week later under an agreement worked out between the union and the B.C. Ferries Corporation by labour board vice-chairman Ed Peck. The agreement specified there would be no reprisals against the workers and the unionists would carry on normal duties.

But tourist operators who had lost business during the walkout hounded the government for action against the workers and threatened a damages suit. In order to get the union to agree on a return to work, labour board chairman Weiler had to step into the picture with a signed statement that he considered court action to be closed. It was noted at this point that the labour code required that the board give its consent to court action in these cases.



All of this served to touch off a round of recriminatory debate by the politicians that nobody should be able to break the law without suffering some kind of punishment. Premier Bennett led the parade with a statement that his government did not have sufficient control of the situation through the crown ferry corporation or the labour board.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES DISPUTES ACT

And so it was in this atmosphere that the government brought in a new law at an emergency legislative session, called the Essential Services Disputes Act, which gave it greater control over public service labour negotiations.

The legislation retained all the previous powers the government had given itself under the labour code and other laws, such as the right to order the labour board to designate essential services and the power to order a 90-day cooling off period.

However, the law also expanded the definition of "essential for the protection of life and health" to include the economic welfare of the province. There are also procedures for special mediation and the union side alone can opt for binding arbitration. In addition, the law sets up an agency to dig into bargaining impasses in the public service, and, if necessary, will arm fact-finders with search warrants to obtain information that might be withheld.

The new law made it clear that the government would be peering over the shoulder of all labour negotiators in the public sector from now on. The restrictions do not include a full ban on public sector strikes but they leave little, if any, doubt that legal strikes could even occur again except as designated or "controlled" strikes.

As for illegal strikes, that question remained unanswered.

The B.C. Federation of Labour held its annual convention soon after the act was passed and adopted a policy of boycotting the government agency and its fact-finders. This was the same tactic used by the federation for four

years from 1968 to combat Bill 33 which introduced a form of compulsory arbitration. That bill died with the election of the NDP.

It remains to be seen how the ESD Act gets tested....

GEORGE DOBIE is a labour reporter with the Vancouver Sun.

WHO CARES

HEALTH AND SAFETY

by Barbara Leimsner

There is no hope for the 57-year-old asbestos worker who found out last year he had developed cancer after working for 25 years in the same Toronto plant. Apparently, no one had ever told him about the dangers of working with the thread-like asbestos fibres. He used to unload asbestos from jute bags without a mask.

"Every time you moved, the dust would fly. Sometimes you couldn't see the ceiling."

"When he came home," his wife said, "his pockets were full of this blue-white dust...but we just didn't know...."

Her husband is one of thousands of victims of occupational diseases each year — victims whose tragic stories have come increasingly to public attention and brought about a surge in public concern over safety and health at the workplace.

REVISIONS TO THE LAW

The health dangers of many contaminants have been brought to the public eye through the media. Increasing attention is also being paid to revisions in occupational health and safety laws by a number of provincial governments. The federal government has recently proposed amendments to Part IV of the federal Labour Code — that part which deals with health and safety.

Many trade unions are also giving priority to health and safety issues. The recent 10th Biennial Conference on Health and Safety, held by the Canadian Labour Congress, was attended by almost 350 delegates — a sharp contrast to the 40 delegates who attended the first CLC health and safety conference 20 years ago.

Federal and scientific agencies are also contributing to the increased public concern. The Science Council of Canada's recent report, *Policies and Poisons: The Containment of Long Term Hazards to Human Health in the*

Environment and in the Workplace, the result of a two-year study, was the first to focus on the long-term environmental and occupational health hazards of six substances (asbestos, lead, mercury, oxides of nitrogen, radiation and vinyl chloride).

Other organizations, including the Canada Safety Council, the Canadian Public Health Association, and the Canadian Medical Association, have recently contributed to public awareness and information in this area.

THE COSTS

Statistics show there is good cause for all the attention. Last year, an estimated 13-million man-days were lost due to work injuries and work-related illnesses. That figure is 1.4 million man-days more than the 11.6 million lost during strikes and lockouts during the same period.

Injuries and fatalities have declined slightly to an average of 11.5 per 100 workers in 1974. The total estimated cost in compensation and direct costs to workers and industry exceeded \$800 million last year.

These figures are largely concerned with accidents and injuries and not with the occupational diseases that develop from prolonged exposure to noisy, dirty workplaces or to various physical or chemically toxic hazards. Thus, while accidents cause over 85 per cent of job deaths, unions, governments and scientists are now



examining the approximately 15 per cent of deaths that result from diseases contracted on, or related to the job. Since disabilities from long-term exposures to disease-causing substances do not show up right away — they may in fact appear decades later — those disabilities now account for only 1.6 per cent of all workmen's compensation cases.

This picture, however, is changing. For example, only 12 years ago, the Workmen's Compensation Board in Québec paid benefits to only one worker because of work-related deafness; in 1970, the number had grown to 17 and in 1975, 628 workers were compensated for loss of hearing on the job. While a good deal of conclusive evidence has led to a far greater number of compensations for occupational disease, what we are seeing is only the tip of the iceberg.

UNKNOWN HAZARDS

While the hazards of selected work conditions such as those in mining, steel and asbestos have been closely examined, there has to date been no large-scale, comprehensive national or provincial study to determine the magnitude of hazardous exposures facing Canadians on the job.

The hazards of some toxic substances have been known for centuries. Mercury was first recorded as a hazard in the first century A.D. The risks of radiation were known in 1895. The hazards of asbestos fibres were first

suggested in 1907, only 31 years after the world's first asbestos mine opened in Québec.

However, little is known about the harmful effects of the massive number of new chemicals introduced after World War II. According to one source, the book, **WORK IS DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEALTH**, "about 3,000 new chemicals are introduced into industry each year, yet standards are being developed for only about 100 chemicals per year."

The Canadian experience with polyvinyl chloride (PVC) graphically shows the undetermined nature of the long-term effects of these chemicals on human health.

In 1973, PVC, a resin used in the production of a wide variety of plastic products, came to world attention as a health hazard when three cases of a rare liver cancer were reported in a U.S. plant producing vinyl chloride. By 1976, there were 48 known PVC-related cases of the disease. Ten of these were in Canada, nine in one Québec plant. Until the findings of the rare cancer were connected with the chemical, it had been considered relatively safe. International production of polyvinyl chloride reached an astronomical 18 billion pounds in 1974.

NEED FOR PREVENTIVE SAFETY

The announcement of the hazard caused a flurry of responses from industry, government and labour. More stringent standards were set, abatement and monitoring technologies were either implemented or developed, and extensive research programs were started. To some degree, this quick and generally co-operative effort to reduce the risk makes polyvinyl chloride a "success story". But the Science Council report on PVC warns: "We are only now reacting to the bad effects of hazardous substances and have yet to learn how to anticipate them.... We must develop a preventive rather than simply a reactive strategy as regards hazardous substances."

The need for more informed action to improve the country's record in industrial health is slowly being met by government, industry and the unions. But government plant inspections have proven to be of limited effectiveness because of the large number of workplaces to be checked. Safety inspectors can only detect a limited number of conditions and inspect only by government agencies has proven to be a costly way to try to upgrade conditions.

e report....worklife report.....work

"We've developed the view that we're not safety inspectors, we're out to help people do the inspecting themselves," says one federal labour department official.

NEW APPROACHES — NEW LEGISLATION

The "do-it-yourself" approach relies on the goodwill of the traditional adversaries — labour and management — to improve the quality of worklife. New trends in provincial and federal legislation stress self-inspection and self-regulation by worker-management committees on a plant by plant basis. The legislation has also given workers the right to refuse to work where they determine their safety or health might be endangered.

Saskatchewan led the way with pace-setting legislation in 1972. The province's Occupational Health Act pulled together the scattered agencies and officials dealing with occupational health and safety into one division of the Department of Labour. (The hodgepodge of jurisdictions in the provinces means there are currently some 45 departments and agencies administering 21 acts applying to occupational health and safety across the country. Nine federal departments and agencies administer 16 separate acts.)

The Saskatchewan Act required all workplaces with more than 10 employees to set up a joint worker-management committee. The law is backed up by provincial inspectors with sweeping powers and the resources of the division. Under the law, all employees can refuse to work if they have "reasonable grounds" to believe it endangers their health. At the same time, employers are forbidden to penalize workers who use this right.

"This is not like all those flowery statements," says Robert Sass, Saskatchewan's associate deputy minister of labour and director of the occupational health and safety division. "It's a right. It's in the law."

Sass outlined the underlying reasons why workers should take part in determining and controlling the hazards where they work.

"Occupational health and safety is a field where the uneducated but experienced factory worker may know more about certain aspects of a problem than does a company doctor, a lawyer or an industrial engineer."

JOINT CO-OPERATION WILL HELP

Alberta and Manitoba have adopted their own versions of the Saskatchewan law, although the joint committees are not mandatory in Manitoba. Ontario has recently instituted similar changes in its legislation, and Québec is readying a comprehensive policy on industrial health and safety.

Joint co-operation on health and safety committees is also supported by labour groups. Canada's largest union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) has wholeheartedly endorsed the election of union members to the committees. In a policy statement adopted at the union's convention last fall the joint labour-management committees were encouraged to "amicably" work towards a healthy and safe work environment.

"I'm all in favour of joint health and safety committees," says Ken Valentine, health and safety director for the United Steel Workers of America (USWA). "But they require a number of things to make them effective. First, the workforce must be educated to be able to make intelligent decisions. And they have to have the legislation behind them so they can enforce the standards, ensure compliance, and monitor themselves. Workers have to have input into decision-making at the safety committee level. They need the authority to get things done."

"Up to now, we've almost been operating on a crisis basis," Valentine says.

"Now we stress preventive action."

UNIONS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The USWA is carrying out educational and training programs on a regional basis, first to teach workers how to monitor their workplaces, and to keep them abreast of the legislation. The union is also producing several half-hour video programs on some of the "top 10 or 20 contaminants," aimed at informing both workers and the community. The first one, now in production, is on the lead smelter at Bellemead, New Brunswick. A workplace bulletin called "Hazard Alert" will update workers in various industries of the hazards where they work.

Both the federal government and the Ontario government plan to set up Occupational Health and Safety



Centres. The federal centre had its origins some 15 months ago.

"It will serve mainly as an information centre," says director, Howard Currie. "Its purpose is to provide good, reliable information to workers."

While the centre will have no legislative or enforcement powers, it is viewed by many as a positive development to facilitate research and co-ordinate the activities of provincial, territorial and federal governments. It will also serve as a place where agencies and institutions with expertise can trade information.

Dr. D.F. Hicks of the federal Department of Health and Welfare told Canadian Labour Congress delegates the centre "is the link between the profit motive on the one hand and the health and welfare of workers on the other."

"The enlightened worker has to accept the responsibility to be the inspector in each workplace," he added.

MANY PROBLEMS STILL EXIST

While the new legislation, joint committees and the proposed

Occupational Health and Safety Centre are significant steps forward, many problems still exist. There are still very few doctors or professionals trained in the fields of occupational medicine, nursing or industrial hygiene. And there are very few universities in Canada where medical students can learn about the relationships between disease and work. The medical profession is still predominantly treatment oriented, not prevention oriented.

"All too often we just end up putting a bandaid on a wooden leg," Dr. Albert Nantel of the regional Toxicology Centre in Québec City told CLC delegates.

But workers are beginning to come, with enthusiasm and interest, to courses and seminars on health and safety.

There is room for optimism when the central idea that is winning acceptance is that those who take the risks — workers themselves — should also have a say in how those risks are handled.

BARBARA LEIMSNER is a freelance writer living in Ottawa.

Labour Education

AN INTERVIEW WITH HARRY JACKS

OTTAWA — Harry Jacks has high hopes for improved labour education programs in Canada.

A former education director for the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers, Jacks, 59, is now director of the newly established Labour Education and Studies Centre at the CLC's headquarters in Ottawa.

The Centre, which is being funded over the next five years by a \$10 million federal grant, will serve as an umbrella organization for existing labour education programs, as well as a centre for researching and developing new teaching resources.

Most labour education programs offered by unions, and some colleges and universities, focus on the instruction of tool courses for trade unions, such as collective bargaining, steward training and union administration. But, the Centre is going to try to develop a broader range of course material.

"One of the things we hope to do here is supplement existing programs, on a higher level," Jacks told *Worklife* in an interview recently.

"Trade unionists have to have an understanding of the economic, social

Ted Grant — Photographers



"Trade unionists have to have an understanding of the economic, social and political development around them, in Canada as well as abroad," says Harry Jacks, director of the CLC Labour Education and Studies Centre.

and political development around them, in Canada as well as abroad," he explained.

The Centre was established last summer following a study by the CLC which showed the need for a variety of labour education programs. These include courses to develop the skills of full-time officers and staff; train education officers; provide information on occupational safety and health issues and, generally, enable more workers to deal with federal, municipal and provincial agencies on a variety of issues.

"As trade unionists get a better understanding of all the forces in our society, they will be better able to play a more effective role as citizens of the country...not just within trade unions."

The overall course direction for new programs and material is the responsibility of the board of directors, while the day-to-day administration of the centre is handled by a national co-ordinating committee, which includes the centre's director. Local unions in each region, however, will have a say in the type of programs that are developed at the centre.

A program advisory committee in each region will make course recommendations to regional boards which will be passed on to the national centre.

"We'll do the program research and development, and test them here. Then they'll be taken back to the people for their own use," said Jacks.

Staff at the national centre, and five satellite regional centres have begun to research and develop course outlines and training manuals for use by the CLC and its affiliates. A modern production studio at the Centre containing VTR cameras and other audio-visual equipment, will facilitate the creation of new and sophisticated teaching aids, which can also be used by the affiliated unions.

Jacks said that he would like to see the Centre become "a source of research programs of many facets of labour education."

And he added that when the present grant expires (in 1982) he hoped that, "if we're successful", the grant would be continued and increased, and that other unions might be encouraged to support the Centre.

Eliminate Grain Dust Hazard

Recent studies have shown that the 31,000 workers employed in the grain handling industry across Canada are likely to suffer adverse health effects from exposure to grain dusts and other dusts associated with grain storage.

Reports have revealed the presence of respiratory disease symptoms...

coughing, wheezing, chronic bronchitis, farmer's lung, grain fever, and asthma...in up to three-quarters of the workers exposed to grain dust. Some of these effects were reported as early as 1924.

Furthermore, safety conditions in several major government-inspected grain elevators have been described in reports as "deplorable". While the exact reasons for adverse health effects have not been determined, some researchers believe the presence of poisonous fumigants for grain treatment pose a significant hazard.

The federal labour department has started a program to eliminate or control the hazards associated with the grain industry. Health and safety standards have been adopted, and research is being carried out to determine if the standards should be changed. Regular inspections of grain elevators are being conducted.



Other aspects of the program include the installation of dust reduction equipment, the use of protective respirators by workers for a three-year period (while dust levels are reduced to threshold levels) as well as extensive medical surveillance of workers.

Support for the program was expressed by both union and industry representatives at a meeting with Labour Canada officials last September.

It is expected the implementation of environmental monitoring, worker safety training seminars and proper supervision in any place where grain dust exposure occurs will substantially reduce the health hazards faced by grain handlers.

expedited arbitration

VANCOUVER — Members of Local Union 7623 of the United Steel Workers of America have introduced a clause in their new contract which they hope will save them money and encourage good labour relations at their workplace.

Jack Hill, Vancouver area supervisor who helped negotiate the new contract at Weiser Lock Company, said the clause guarantees "expedited arbitration" for local union members.

He told *Steel Labour*, the USWA newspaper, that the use of expedited arbitration represents a significant step forward in bringing a fairer and more efficient system of justice to the worker on the job.

"It assures a quick form of hearing and a more understandable decision that will not be tied up in red tape or dozens of legal precedents."

Hill said the method has been used for the last three years in the United

States, and is slowly being introduced into Canadian contracts. About six locals in the Vancouver area have added the clause to their contracts in the last year, he said.

One of the advantages of expedited arbitration is that it takes only a few weeks to get a decision on a case, compared with months under common arbitration, said Hill.

So far, "15 to 20" cases have been heard by expedited arbitration in the Vancouver district, and Hill estimates fees average \$50 a case, compared with \$1,000 fees in common arbitration cases.

Because of the prompt arbitration decisions, grievances don't "fester" at the shop, said Hill.

"This helps to improve labour relations. If you can do it quickly, you can get rid of aggression between the two parties."

Under the new clause, grievances from the USWA locals are processed normally up to the point of arbitration and then selected grievances go to a single arbitrator, instead of a three-man board. The arbitrator then conducts an investigation into the issues, "on the spot". Arbitrators are on call by telephone and hearings are informal — witnesses are not required to be formally sworn in. The arbitrator writes an award giving a brief statement of facts, references to the contract, and then his decision within 24 hours. Arbitrators may hear a number of cases during one sitting.

"Expedited arbitration will make the whole procedure more understandable for the average grievor," said Hill.

"The company will have to argue and respond to grievances in a more straightforward manner and on their merits. In the past we have had grievances dismissed on a narrow legal technicality. This will no longer be the case."

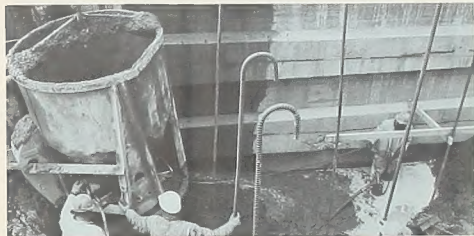
Towards a better worklife:

The intent of Labour Canada's 14-point program for improving industrial relations in Canada is threefold: improvement to the structure and process of labour-management relations; improvement to the work environment; and improvement to the collective bargaining process.

One of the non-legislative initiatives of the program to improve the work environment is the setting up of a national centre on Quality of Working Life.

Quality of Working Life experiments under the direction of a tripartite National Council on Quality of Working Life.

This National Centre approach has recently been shelved in favour of a grass roots "network" approach which will encourage the development of provincial or regional structures more responsive to the interests and attitudes of unions and employers at local levels. In place of the Centre, Labour Canada has established a small



Quality of Working Life, more commonly known as QWL, is based on the premise that labour-management relations improve if workers are allowed to participate in decision-making affecting their roles as workers. This may be done in a variety of ways, such as profit-sharing

unit at Ottawa to provide financial, technical and administrative support to unions, employers, universities and provincial agencies interested in Quality of Working Life.

Activities which will be encouraged by Labour Canada include the training of



and putting workers on boards of directors. Simply stated, QWL is a shop-floor version of industrial democracy.

The success of QWL experiments in Europe and the United States convinced the government that more support and encouragement should be given to QWL in Canada. To this end, the new initiatives program included provisions for the setting up of a national centre on Quality of Working Life.

In recent months the federal labour department has been exploring with their provincial counterparts, and with representatives of unions and employers, the best way to encourage experimentation in this new participative technique. Labour Canada's original plan called for an independent Centre which would promote

individuals to function as facilitators of QWL experiments, financial support for conferences, workshops and the development of QWL courses in schools of business administration. The Labour Canada QWL unit will also function as a communications and research co-ordination centre for individuals and organizations throughout Canada who are interested in the theory and practice of QWL.

The senior project officer for Quality of Working Life in Labour Canada will be Carl Johnston who has been seconded from Air Canada to the federal government for two years. Mr. Johnston has co-ordinated a number of QWL projects in Air Canada and is one of a growing number of organization consultants throughout the country who see shared decision-making, by employees and supervisors on the shop floor, as a key to more effective labour relations in Canada.

Readers' Forum

A newspaper without letters to the editor is a bit like the sound of one hand clapping. We want to hear your views on issues dealt with in WORKLIFE. All letters will be read with interest and several will be selected

for publication under the above heading in future issues of WORKLIFE. Please address letters to The Editor, WORKLIFE/VIE AU TRAVAIL, Labour Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0J2.

SINGLE-TEAM BARGAINING

A former personnel director for Labatt Breweries Limited has developed an approach to collective bargaining, which is based on the belief that union and management reps can work as a team to determine acceptable settlements.

Tom Crossman, now running his own consulting business and promoting "single-team bargaining" says unions can have a larger role in the bargaining process, without making compromises to management.

He says that by defusing the confrontation mood of bargaining, negotiations can be more flexible, games can be eliminated, and labour-management relations improved.

"The overall result is that for both parties, settlements are easier to achieve and live with."

Crossman, a 47-year-old London, Ontario native, bases his beliefs partly on behavioural science theories, but also on experience. Single-team bargaining was initiated by Labatt's in negotiations with the Edmonton local of the union — then the International Union of United Brewery, Flour, Cereal,

He suggests discussions should take place in a casual setting, not in a "we-they" standoff across the bargaining table. All discussions are off the record and no statements are considered binding, until agreements are written and signed. Spokesmen act as moderators and participation by all bargaining members is encouraged. Attention is focused on solutions to problems, not on differences in points of view. The union and the company reps state in the beginning what their constraints are in dealing with each problem. In single-team bargaining, "demands" are phrased as "problems" to be worked out by both parties.

Crossman says that by using his approach, feelings of hostility, and frustration can be replaced by those of co-operation, mutual respect and self-esteem.

He realizes, however, that single-team bargaining won't work in every bargaining session; for instance, in bargaining wages or other monetary issues. But, he says, the single-team approach can change the climate of negotiations so that "by the time you get to the monetary issues, the harshness is not there."



Soft Drink and Distillery Workers of America, in 1972. Since then it's been used successfully in several of Labatt's 13 plants.

How does it work? Crossman says that a few ground rules must be practised to enable negotiators to act as one team, rather than reps of either the union or management "side".

It's doubtful that single-team bargaining can work in situations where there is a history of poor union-management relations, characterized by mistrust. But, Crossman says the approach has demonstrated its capacity to defuse contentious issues, and as such merits examination by those who strive to foster co-operation in collective bargaining.

yesterdayesterday

A MINER'S LIFE

"Canadian history should be approached from a coal miner's point of view. That would give us something basic."

So wrote Charles Lipton in his book entitled, *The Trade Union Movement of Canada, 1827-1959*. Lipton also described the daily struggles of coal miners in the 1900's who conducted prolonged strikes, many lasting more than a year.

In the first 15 years of this century, 78,000 coal miners were involved in strikes — the largest number in any industry at that time.

One of the outstanding disputes of this period was the Cape Breton coal strike of 1909-11. Led by the United Mine Workers of America, it involved about 1,500 miners. At the end of the strike, only 34 of the miners had broken ranks, and of these, only eight were miners.

The lyrics below are from the song, "A Miner's Life" which was written to describe this stormy decade of coal strikes. The song was first recorded by George Korson in 1940 in his book, "Coal Dust on the Fiddle". The song is still sung today by miners in Nova Scotia, Wales and parts of the U.S.

A miner's life is like a sailor's
Board a ship to cross the wave;
Ev'ry day his life's in danger;
Still he ventures, being brave,
Watch the rocks, they're falling daily;
Careless miners always fail;
Keep your hand upon the dollar,
And your eye upon the scale!

Soon this trouble will be ended;
Union men will have their rights,
After many years of bondage,
Digging days and digging nights,
Then by honest weight we'll labor;
Union workers never fail;
Keep your hand upon the dollar,
And your eye upon the scale!

CHORUS:

Union miners, stand together!
Heed no operator's tale!
Keep your hand upon the dollar,
And your eye upon the scale!

You've been docked and docked again, boys,
What have you to show for working
Since this mining has begun?
Worn-out boots and worn-out miners,
And your children growing pale;
Keep your hand upon the dollar,
And your eye upon the scale!

In conclusion, bear in memory,
Keep this password in your mind:
God provides for ev'ry worker
When in union they combine.
Stand like men, and linked together
Vict'ry for you will prevail;
Keep your hand upon the dollar,
And your eye upon the scale!



The warning "keep your eye upon the scale" refers to the coal owners' practice of underweighing the coal cars before the unions succeeded in appointing a union checkweighman.

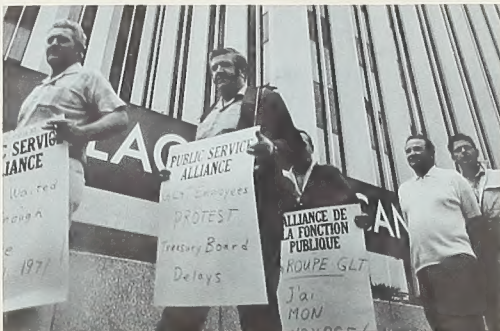
Crossing Picket Lines

The Ontario Labour Relations Board has ruled that refusal by workers to cross a picket line is an illegal strike unless the employees can prove they acted individually.

In a 25-page decision on a case involving the Nelson Stone Co. of Burlington, the board ruled that a clause in a collective agreement giving workers the right not to cross a picket line does not override the law that

prohibits work stoppages during the life of a contract.

The decision said that a refusal to cross a picket line must be tested against the law, which states any refusal to work during a collective agreement is an illegal strike if employees have acted "in combination or in concert or in accordance with a common understanding."



McDermott Supported

Newspaper reports indicate that Dennis McDermott, Canadian director of the United Auto Workers will likely succeed Joseph Morris as president of the Canadian Labour Congress.

Mr. McDermott, 54, who is also international vice-president of the UAW, has received the unanimous endorsement of the executive council of the CLC to succeed Mr. Morris, who is retiring at the congress convention in April.

The UAW leader supports a greater concentration of power within the CLC and sees a role for the congress in centralized collective bargaining.

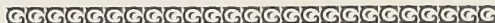
Following his endorsement at the executive council meeting in December, Mr. McDermott said that if handled right, the CLC could become a "stronger, more viable and more effective labour centre."

FARM SAFETY

A \$27,000 Canada Works grant will be used to hire four unemployed teachers to conduct a 10-month farm and home safety campaign in the Ottawa-Carleton region of Ontario.

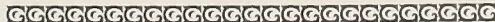
Vic Thompson of the Ottawa-Carleton Safety Council told the Eastern Ontario regional meeting of the Farm Safety Association in Elginburg that the program will be conducted in schools in the area.

During the summer, the four-member team will present safety demonstrations at local fairs and various organizations.



THE LABOUR GAZETTE — a monthly magazine devoted to labour affairs — provides its readers with a balanced perspective on the entire work-related scene. Articles cover a broad spectrum of timely issues ranging from the quality of working life to the arbitration process to the state of the economy and much more.

You can make your own assessment of the **LABOUR GAZETTE** by requesting a free three-month trial subscription. For further information, please write: The Editor, **LABOUR GAZETTE**, **LABOUR CANADA**, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0J2



Labour-management Health and safety Committees

Industrial safety and health is one area where the government believes immediate and substantial progress can be made in getting labour and management together for the purposes of mutual consultation and decision-making.

Proposed amendments to Part IV of the Canada Labour Code include provisions for setting up joint labour-management safety and health committees in industries under the federal government's jurisdiction, such as railways, airlines, banking, trucking, broadcasting, grain-handling, communications and port operations.

According to the proposal, safety and health committees would identify and ensure the correction of work hazards.

Shortly after the 14-point program was announced in October, 1976, Labour Canada's Occupational Safety and Health Branch formed a departmental task force of safety and health specialists and labour affairs officers. This group has recently completed a draft manuscript for a booklet to be distributed to workers which will explain the purpose of the safety and health committees.

Work on two other booklets is also underway. The first will be a booklet for labour affairs officers that explains the legislation governing safety and health committees, while the second is a booklet for safety and health committee members on the purpose, responsibilities and working of the committees.

The task force is studying methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the committees. Work has also begun on developing a training program to assist labour affairs officers to teach safety and health committee members proper safety and health inspection techniques.

WORKER OUTPUT INCREASES

Productivity, or output per worker, rose 3.6 per cent in 1976 after only fractional increases in each of the two previous years. Statistics Canada has reported.

This was the largest productivity increase in Canada for any year since 1972. But it is still slightly below the average annual rate of growth of 3.8 per cent for the 15-year period from 1961 to 1976.

Goods-producing industries showed productivity increases of 3.8 per cent, while service industries had increases of 3.3 per cent.

Seminars planned for retiring civil servants

Alberta's Federal Pre-retirement Committee faces a busy year with 20 weekend seminars planned to provide pre-retirement education to an expected 605 public service employees and their spouses.

The committee is made up of one paid co-ordinator and several volunteers, all full-time employees of various government departments.

This year, Warren Dahl, retires as full-time co-ordinator. He'll be replaced by Fred Brown, a division director who recently retired from the department of veterans affairs.

SEMINARS PLANNED

Seminars are planned in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer and Grande Prairie in Alberta, as well as in Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory and Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories.

The Friday evening session opening each weekend is designed to explore and demonstrate what happens in

retirement and to find out what the particular concerns of the group members are.

Then during the next two days, sessions are held on a wide range of subjects — financial planning, superannuation, federal benefits, income tax, estate planning, health, living arrangements, life enrichment/and use of free time.

DECISION PRAISED

The committee has been providing such seminars for several years. It praised the treasury board's decision to release a directive on pre-retirement education, but contends that the directive was putting into print what the committee was already doing.

The directive put the treasury board on record as being in favour of pre-retirement education for every employee over 55 years old.

*Reprinted with permission from the
Argus Journal.*

union study

OTTAWA...Independent local unions are reluctant to use the strike weapon, believe in co-operative rather than adversary employer-employee relations, and support the Anti-Inflation Board's mandatory wage guidelines.

Nevertheless, according to a report on a national survey, published in the December issue of THE LABOUR GAZETTE, a federal labour department publication, they do not see themselves as "company unions" accepting substandard wages and working conditions.

The survey, believed to be the first of independent unions in Canada, was undertaken by G.S. Rejan, an associate professor in the department of management at Concordia University in Montreal, and W. Grigoletti, a graduate student in business administration.

HOW DO WE RATE?

WORKLIFE is new and experimental. It has two principal objectives — first to serve as a communication link among people working in industrial relations throughout Canada, and second, to highlight initiatives and events which reflect a problem-solving approach to employer-employee relations. We would like to provide you with a wide variety of information from workplaces in Canada, and this issue — the first — attempts to do just that.

What do you think we could improve? Please help us put out a first-rate product by rating the articles contained in this issue. (Rate them by number from 1 to 10, 10 being "excellent"; 5 "worth reading" and 1, "not worth reading"). Your participation will be appreciated.

ARTICLES

1. Workers Keep on Trucking
2. Labour Education
3. Expedited Arbitration
4. Worklife Report:
Eliminate Grain Dust Hazards
Health and Safety at the Workplace: Who Cares?
5. Labour Scene
6. Old Ways — Outmoded
7. Perspectives/Strikes and Essential Services
8. Quebec's Anti-Scab Legislation
9. Towards A Better Workplace
10. The Great Debate

RATING

10
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5
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2
1

Employee ☐

Supervisor ☐

Manager ☐

Union official ☐

Government Official ☐

Academic ☐

Other ☐

Comments:

Productivity levels rise. buying power still lagging

The Conference Board of Canada reported last November that labour productivity levels in selected industries within the manufacturing sector rose more rapidly in Canada compared with the United States, and wages outstripped U.S. wages, in the years between 1966 and 1975. But, real earnings — the purchasing power level of wages — still remained much lower.

The report noted that there was some deterioration in Canada's relative competitive position compared with the U.S., because relative gains in productivity were not enough to offset the more rapid rise in labour earnings in some of the industries surveyed.

Wages in most of the industries had reached parity with those in the U.S. by October, 1975, increasing from 75 per cent of American wages to 102 per cent. But purchasing power remained below that of the U.S., mainly because of the higher costs of housing and durable goods.

Estimated Relative Productivity Levels (Canada/United States) — Percentage in 1967 and 1974, by Major Industry Groups

	Canadian Prices *		American Prices **	
	1967 %	1974 %	1967 %	1974 %
Non-Durable Goods	53	68	61	70
Food Processing	72	69	73	78
Textiles Clothing, Knitting	70	83	90	90
Paper Products	76	77	99	88
Petroleum Refining	37	70	25	55
Miscellaneous	44	53	29	50
Durable Goods	73	94	70	98
Wood Products	111	117	117	147
Metal Products	70	93	71	96
Motor Vehicles & Parts	77	100	61	93
Miscellaneous	60	68	60	65
Total Sample	62	77	65	82

Source: The Conference Board in Canada

* Assuming that all American inputs and outputs are expressed in Canadian prices.

** Assuming that all Canadian inputs and outputs are expressed in American prices.

WORKLIFE

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Hon. John Munro
Minister

T.M. Eberlee
Deputy Minister

P.M. Roddick
Director

Jenny Trapnell — Editor

Marie-Claire Pommé —
Production Co-ordinator

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LAUGHTER is Good for You

A psychologist in Tel Aviv thinks he has proved laughter is good for you.

Dr. Avner Ziv has been doing research on laughter for over two years and he has developed several theories from his findings.

One is that laughter can help people learn, because they can retain knowledge better from a teacher who has a sense of humour.

Another theory is that laughter can help you improve your work if you are a salesman, bank clerk or soda jerk, but can give you problems on the job if you work on a factory assembly line or in a typing pool.

The explanation for that is that laughing uses up a lot of energy and can affect motor co-ordination for a brief period of time.

Minimum wages rise in two provinces

QUEBEC — Quebec's minimum wage rose to \$3.27 an hour on Jan. 1, up from \$3.15 an hour.

Last June the government announced that the minimum wage would be adjusted every Jan. 1 and July 1, based on the average industrial wage.

However, a spokesman for the Quebec manpower department said following the announcement that the increase is related instead to the consumer price index. It would have been higher had it been tied to the industrial wage average, he said, and the government feels that economic conditions do not warrant such an increase.

SASKATCHEWAN — The minimum wage in Saskatchewan went up from \$3.00 to \$3.15 on Jan. 31, and will be rising to \$3.25 on June 30.

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